

Pre-K News

A Newsletter for Pre-K
Staff



SUMMER 2006, VOLUME I, ISSUE 4

SPOTLIGHT ON...

As a part of our quarterly newsletter, OSR would like to recognize one site each quarter for their exceptional performances. This quarter we recognize **NW-Shoals in Colbert County**.

The NW-Shoals Pre-K program began in 2001 (during the second year of funding for OSR Pre-school programs). They are one of the few sites that have retained all of their original staff members: Dianne Pace as director, Vickie Green as lead teacher, and Jennifer Thompson as auxiliary teacher. The three of them make a fantastic team.

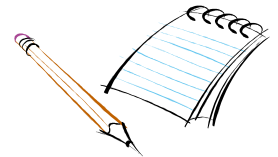
The site is housed on the campus of Northwest-Shoals Community College. They are a lab site for child development students at NW-Shoals and for Early Childhood Education majors at Athens State University. They have consistently worked closely with area Head Starts and even partnered this past year with a local Head Start (Sheffield) in providing parent enrichment trainings.

They are vital members of a collaborative Task Force, KIDSTUFF, which involves other Pre-K sites from Colbert and Lauderdale counties. The staff at NW-Shoals has established amazing rapport with local legislators, hosting numerous events to welcome community leaders into their classroom, letting the Shoals area realize what quality pre-k is all about.

NW-Shoals earned NAEYC accreditation in 2001 and they have repeatedly served as mentors for other pre-k sites from all over the state. Dianne, Vickie, and Jennifer have served as presenters throughout the state sharing their talents with others who work with young children. These three ladies have many talents, but helping a child to blossom is certainly one of their greatest strengths.

Things to Remember

July-September



- Please send special items such as class photographs, CD's, and binders to Emily Cumbie.
- Please do not send in CD's or Binders with your end-of-the-year information. Please limit materials sent in to paper form only!!
- All End of the Year Reports are due 30 days after the pre-k site closes.
- OSR Report Form is due quarterly not monthly.

Items Due *by the last day of August 2006:*

- OSR Report Form
- Child Demographic Form

Items Due *by October 2006:*

- Classroom Budget
- Site Demographic Information Sheet
- Teacher Demographic Information Form
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Items Due *30 days after program starts:*

- Parent Orientation Sign-In Form
- Parent Verification Form
- Planned Parent Activities for the Year
- Copies of Staff Background Checks
- Original TANF Forms
- Accreditation Documentation
- Physical Exam Form

Items Due *by October 6, 2006:*

- Parent Contracts Signed
- Pre-K Code of Student Behavior

All of the above information must be submitted to OSR prior to the disbursement of the first check!!



Message From the Director

Hello State Pre-K Sites,

Congratulations on the closing of a wonderful year and opening of a New Year!!!! There are now 60 State Pre-K programs. I would like to encourage all of you to talk, share, and cheer each other on as you work toward the same goal of preparing 4-year-old children for school. For contact information to each site, please visit our website (www.dca.state.al.us/office of school readiness) or check the information emailed to you by Ms. Janet Wood.

A bill passed in the last legislative session to grant OSR a conditional ("if funding is available") **\$1,000,000** for FY 2006-07 for the operation of State Pre-K. Please contact your local legislators and encourage them to make sure these funds are forwarded to OSR in Oct/Nov. 2006. If OSR receives these funds, each site that offers benefits to their teachers will get an additional \$5,000 for FY 2006-07.

Congratulations to each State Pre-K site that has obtained either NAEYC or SACS accreditation:

Autauga	Hale – Greensboro East Elementary
Baldwin	Hale – Greensboro West Elementary
Barbour	Henry
Bibb (Pending)	Lauderdale – Kilby Child Development Center
Cleburne	Lauderdale – Central Elementary (Pending)
Colbert – Cherokee Elem.	Lee (Pending)
Colbert – North West Shoals	Limestone
Conecuh	Madison
Coosa	Marshall – Boaz Elementary (Pending)
Covington – Pearl Pre-K	Marshall – Union Grove Elementary (Pending)
Dallas – Selma's Pre-K	Montgomery – (Pending)
DeKalb – Early Intervention	Morgan
Elmore	Russell
Etowah (Pending)	Talladega
Franklin	Tuscaloosa



Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Dr. Trellis Smith Williams



Technical Assistant's Corner

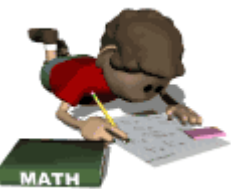
OSR will offer several trainings later this summer. On **July 31, 2006**, all **lead** teachers must attend a meeting at the United Way building in Birmingham. During this meeting, the TA's will share information regarding assessments which will be used next Fall. Also, considerable time will be spent discussing **Developmentally Appropriate Practices** for pre-k classrooms.

On August 1-2, 2006, all **new** teachers (new lead teachers and new auxiliary teachers), will meet at the United Way building in Birmingham. During this time, components of a quality pre-k will be shared by trainers. Both days will focus on elements which are vital to successful preschool programs. (i.e. scheduling, classroom arrangement, small groups, large groups, teacher-child interaction).

Please make sure that you have contacted Emily Cumbie at OSR to let her know who will be attending these meetings from your site. If you would like to send other staff members you will need to check with Emily to see if room is available (Emily.Cumbie@dca.alabama.gov). Please see attached directions with address to the United Way building in Birmingham. Also we will be ordering box lunches the day of the trainings, so please try to have cash on hand or personal checks if you plan to purchase a lunch with us.

Math is More Than Counting

By: Delyne Hicks & Pamela Laning



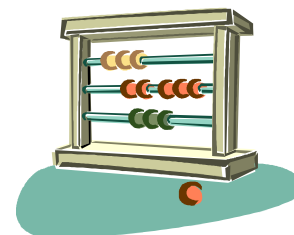
“I’m Bigger Than You!, I’m Five!” These comments, often made by children, express that mathematical thinking is a part of a child’s everyday experience. Teachers often capitalize on children’s interests in numbers by helping them count, recognize numerals, and write numbers. However, the National Council of Teacher’s of Mathematics (NCTM) has created a set of standards that includes the pre-k year. These standards guide pre-k teachers in developing appropriate math curriculum in five areas:

1. Number and Operations
2. Patterns, Functions, and Algebra
3. Shape and Space
4. Statistics and Probability
5. Measurement

Central to the children developing these concepts is active, meaningful experiences that allow them to construct their mathematical thinking. NCTM also outlines process skills that are essential to developing a strong foundation:

1. Communicating
2. Problem Solving
3. Reasoning
4. Connecting
5. Representing

By incorporating quality children’s literature, teachers can incorporate both content and process standards. Listed below are books and activities that link both process skills and content standards.



***Splash** by Ann Jonas*

Everyone gets wet in this mathematical problem solving book. Splashes abound as creatures jump in and out of the pond. This book prompts the reader to solve the problem, “How many creatures are in the pond?” As you read this book, have the children count how many creatures are in the pond and how many creatures are not in the pond. After reading the story, have the children create their own story problems using blue paper and gold fish crackers. For example, pose a problem and let the children use the goldfish crackers to represent the story. “There were three fish in the pond and one more jumped into the pond.” How many are in the pond now?

These activities focus on the content area of Number and Operations as they count, add, and subtract. As they create their own stories they are communicating, connecting the story to real life experiences, and problem solving.

***Shapes, Shapes, Shapes** by Tana Hoban*

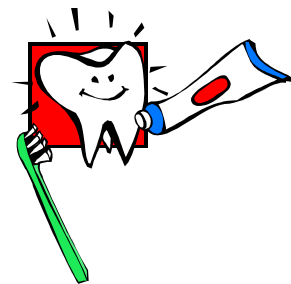


The beautiful photographs in this wordless picture book reveals a world of shapes found in a child’s everyday environment. This book invites you to locate shapes that are not typical, such as arcs, hearts, hexagons, diamonds, stars, and trapezoids. After reading the book, have children pull a shape (triangle, circle, square) from a bag and go on a shape hunt around the room. Have the children share what shape they pulled out of the bag. Have them to tell what objects they found in the room that matched their shape. This helps with children recognizing shapes, problem solving, and connecting two dimensional shapes to real objects in the classroom.

Children’s books link math and literacy in natural, meaningful ways. Books offer visual support as children count, recognize shapes, sort, measure and problem solve. For other books that link literacy and math, contact HATCH at 1-800-624-7968 and ask about their math lending library.

Brush Up On Healthy Teeth: Simple Steps for Kids' Smiles

By: Stuart A. Lockwood, DMD, MPH



Every parent knows that a healthy smile is a sign of a happy child, and oral health experts agree that creating those healthy smiles begin in infancy. Good nutritional and oral hygiene practices and starting at an early age, are important to keep your child's teeth healthy and to ensure a healthy smile that will last a lifetime.

Baby teeth are important to help young children chew food, talk clearly, and save space for the permanent teeth when they erupt in the mouth. At any age, however, tooth decay is preventable whenever appropriate strategies are begun and followed.

Good, nutritional and oral hygiene practices and starting at an early age, are important to keep your child's teeth healthy

Simple steps assist parents in taking care of their children's teeth as well as aid in teaching proper dental habits. Proper dental health practices such as drinking fluoridated water and brushing with a "pea-sized" amount of fluoride toothpaste can greatly improve oral health care in infancy. When used properly, fluoride reduces the risk of tooth decay and improves overall health. There are effective measures that parents can take that are safe, effective and simple. However, it is important that parents understand oral health and begin practicing it early. Listed below are a few examples to get you started in the right direction.

1. Start cleaning teeth early.

As the first tooth appears, begin cleaning by wiping with a clean, damp cloth everyday. When more teeth come on, switch to a small, soft toothbrush. Begin using toothpaste with fluoride when the child is two years old. Use toothpaste with fluoride earlier if your child's doctor or dentist recommends it.

2. Use the right amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Fluoride is important in fighting cavities. But, if children younger than six years old swallow too much fluoride, their teeth may have white spots. To keep this from happening, use only a small amount of toothpaste (about the size of a pea). Teach your child to spit out the toothpaste and to rinse well after brushing.

3. Supervise brushing.

Brush your child's teeth twice a day until your child has the skill to handle the toothbrush alone (usually by age four or five). Then, continue to closely watch brushing to make sure your child is doing a thorough job and using a small amount of toothpaste.

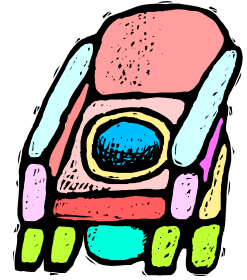
4. Talk to your child's doctor or dentist.

Check with the doctor or dentist about your child's specific fluoride needs. After age two, most children get the right amount of fluoride to help prevent cavities if they drink water that contains fluoride and brush their teeth with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste twice a day.



Parent's Corner

Steps to Toilet-Teaching Success



1. Ease Into It

To get your child used to the idea of the potty, start by letting him/her sit on it fully clothed while you explain what it's for. Try reading a book to him/her or singing a song to keep him/her sitting on the potty for a longer time.

2. Start a Routine

Once your child is comfortable with the potty, take him to use it when he shows signs of needing to "go." You should also have him/her sit on the potty at regular intervals during the day: when he/she wakes up and about 20 minutes after meals and snacks. If he/she does not use it after a few minutes, take him/her off the potty. Don't worry if he/she has accidents or does not go in the potty very often at first.

3. Praise his/her successes

Be positive, even if the progress is slow. "That was a good job of pulling your pants down by yourself" or "I'm happy you told me that you needed to use the potty." These type of statements will keep your child motivated.

4. Be A Good Model

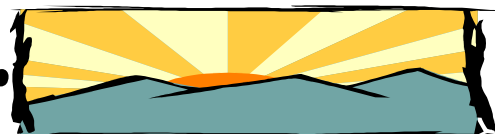
Your child may be very curious about how other family members go to the bathroom. Let him/her observe an older sibling using the toilet, or let him/her stand in the bathroom with you while you use the toilet. It may sound weird, but it works!

5. Don't Push It

If after several weeks, your child just doesn't seem interested or is frustrated, take a break for a while. It takes some children several rounds before they're really ready.



On the Horizon...



- The Sixth National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute **July 25-27, 2006**, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- The Childcare Bureau National Conference **Aug. 7-11, 2006**, Washington, DC
- OSR Advisory Committee Meeting, **Sept. 13, 2006**, Montgomery, Alabama.
- National Accountability Conference on Special Education and Early Intervention **Sept. 18-19, 2006**, Denver, Colorado
- 2006 Alabama Kids Count Conference, **Sept. 29, 2006**, Birmingham, Alabama.
- Children With Special Needs Conference, **Nov. 8-10, 2006**, Mobile, Alabama
- National Association for the Education of Young Children Conference, **Nov. 8-11, 2006**, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2nd. Annual Alabama Pre-K Conference **March 15-16, 2007**, Montgomery, Alabama (AUM)

If you need additional information about any of these events, please contact Danielle Golston at Danielle.Golston@dca.alabama.gov.

Here's More From the NW-Shoals Colbert County Spotlight



Jennifer Thompson and the children enjoy snack preparation together!!